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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KHARTOUM 002140

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SUBJECT: SOMALIA: COMMUNIQUE FROM SECOND ROUND OF SOMALI
TALKS IN KHARTOUM

REF: KHARTOUM 01477

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Classified By: Pol/Econ Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and
(d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The final communique released on September 4 by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) at the closure of the second round of talks in Khartoum calls for peaceful co-existence between factions and the cessation of encouragement and assistance to warlords.⁸ The communique also calls for the reconstitution of the Somali National Army and national police force and the integration of TFG and UIC forces. As a confidence building measure, a joint TFG-UIC committee will be formed to monitor follow-up of the communique, its provisos, and a technical committee, composed of representatives of the Arab League, will be established. A third negotiating round is scheduled to begin on October 30 in Khartoum to address political and security issues, including power-sharing. Key issues remaining include the presence of foreign troops, including potentially those of IGAD. End summary.

Second Round of Inter-Somali Talks Yields Results

¶2. (C) Following talks between representatives of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) and the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) September 2-4 in Khartoum, agreement on several points of discussion was reached late on the night of September 4-5. This included a reaffirmation of the results of the first round of talks held in Khartoum held on June 22, 2006, (reftel) as well as progress on a variety of security arrangements.

Text of the Communique

¶3. (C) The text of the eight-point communique) informal German Embassy translation from Arabic) is as follows:

(Begin text)

FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE 2ND ROUND OF TALKS HELD FOR THE
DELEGATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND ISLAMIC

COURTS BY THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES COMMITTEE ON SOMALIA

KHARTOUM, 2)4 SEPTEMBER 2006

On 2-4 September 2006, the second round of talks for the delegation of the Transitional Federal Government and Union of Islamic Courts was held in Khartoum to complement the first round that was convened in Khartoum on 22 June 2006. To ascertain the aspirations of the Somali people in attaining peace, stability, and reconstruction, the talks has been conducted in a mutual and brotherly atmosphere. The two sides agreed on the following:

¶1. To honor and implement provisions of the agreement signed jointly in Khartoum - Sudan on 22 June 2006.

¶2. To reconstitute the Somali National Army and the national police force and work towards reintegration of the forces of the Union of Islamic Courts, the TFG, and other armed militias in the country. This will be realized through an agreed framework that will be in place during the agreement on the political program.

¶3. The two sides agreed to practice the principles of being a good neighbor and observing peaceful co-existence between Somalia and its neighboring countries as well as non-interference in each others' affairs so as to create an atmosphere conducive to building understanding and confidence.

¶4. The two sides should refrain from helping, rearming, and encouraging warlords.

¶5. The two sides should honor the unity and the nationhood of the Somali people.

¶6. The two sides should honor the will of the Somali people

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wherever they are.

¶7. The remaining aspects of this agreement, including discussions on political, power-sharing, and security issues, will be deliberated on the third round of the talks.

¶8. Institute a joint committee that would follow-up the agreement and at the same time exchange visits to build confidence and mutual collaboration.

¶9. The two sides agreed formation of a technical committee consisting of the Arab League Presidency) Sudan, Arab League General Secretariat, Arab League Committee on Somalia, and others from the Transitional Federal Government and Union of the Islamic Courts.

¶10. The two sides agreed to meet again in Khartoum -Sudan for the third phase of the talks on 30 October 2006.

¶11. Present at the meeting were: the United Nations, Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), European Union, African Union, and Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). It was also agreed that the above stated organizations would participate in the upcoming meetings that would discuss the aforementioned issues.

¶12. The two sides expressed their gratitude to the people and the Government of Sudan as well as President Omar Hassan al-Bashir for hosting the talks and at the same time reaffirmed their commitment in pursuance of measures to ascertain the aspirations of the Somali people.

Dr. Abdullahi Shiekh Ismail

1st Deputy Prime Minister of the

Transitional Federal Government

Dr. Ibrahim Hassan Adow
Head of the UIC Delegation

Signed as Witness

Dr. Lam Akol Ajawin

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sudan

Signed as Witness

Amb. Dr. Salah Abdirisak Halima
Advisor to the Secretary General of the Arab League

Done in Khartoum, Tuesday, 4 September 2006.

(End text)

3rd Round of Talks to Take Place in Khartoum Oct. 30

¶4. (C) The second round concluded with an agreement to discuss power sharing, political issues, and security arrangements at a third round to commence on October 30 in Khartoum. Although there will not be mediators, it was agreed that several entities would serve as observers at the third round: UN, IGAD, AU, OIC, and EU. Local press accounts in Arabic cite Sudanese Minister of Foreign Affairs Lam Akol as expressing trust that both sides would abide by commitments made, and that the third round would be the last.

UIC: Presence of Foreign Troops Impedes Progress

¶5. (C) During a September 3 briefing of representatives from the U.S., UK, Germany, Finland, and Sweden, as well as Italian Special Envoy to Somalia Mario Rafaeli, EU Assistant Field Officer for Somalia Operations Ahmed Khalif, and Arab League Ambassador to Kenya and Special Envoy for Somalia Salim Mohammed Salim al Khussaibi, UIC delegation head and

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Secretary General for Foreign Affairs Ibrahim Hassan Adow

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stated, in English, that talks were proceeding in a relaxed environment marked by mutual respect. Misconceptions had been cleared up, and discussion took up where it had left off in the first round in June. His main concern was that Ethiopian troops had entered Somalia at the TFG's invitation, and now were present in seven or eight places within Somalia, with human rights abuses and killings taking place. Adow said that foreign forces had no place in Somalia, and served only to isolate the TFG and complicate the political situation, while threatening to expand TFG-held areas. He doubted the presence of Eritrean forces with Somalia, and said that they should be removed if found.

¶6. (C) Adow closed by inviting participants to visit Mogadishu, which he said was now safe. The people of Somalia are in need of immediate help, and the international community should become involved, while remaining politically neutral. Somalia's family is divided, and we want to make it one again.

TFG: Committed to Agreement, Despite Serious Differences

¶7. (C) That same evening, Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden of the TFG advised the same audience through translation from Arabic that the TFG was determined and committed to a resolution of

the "serious differences" between the parties. He expressed hopes for an agreement, and noted that the parties had been meeting continuously since arrival in Khartoum. Aden said the TFG aspired to the maximum achievable agreement, while admitting that agreement could not be found for all issues. He said the TFG delegation would not leave Khartoum without a communique, and would consult those present if roadblocks occurred. Aden stated that he was not aware of foreign troops in Somalia now, and added that the need for them may be eliminated; he had heard reports of the presence of troops, but had not seen verification. Their presence is a fundamental issue that has to be resolved through dialogue, although ultimately resting with parliament.

¶8. (C) Aden observed that during the second round the TFG wished to discuss political issues first, and then security matters, while the UIC sought the opposite. After much discussion the TFG agreed to the latter approach. The second round of talks started with a mutual reaffirmation of the first round's agreement; the TFG has a formula for power sharing and is willing to accommodate the UIC. He said that both sides regarded the presence of IGAD troops as an issue yet to be resolved; IGAD is divided, as is the international community. He urged the international community to be constructive, and to speak forthrightly by asking IGAD to accept the situation as it is. Conflict among IGAD states is being transferred in to Somalia, he added. The TFG, he concluded, is a weak government that cannot protect itself from its neighbors; it is a victim of regional aggression and insecurity.

Comment

¶9. (C) In both briefings, Contact Group representatives expressed support for ongoing dialogue, a formal communique outlining areas where progress was reached, and a commitment by both parties to a subsequent negotiating round. Also, in both briefings guests were made to feel welcome by their interlocutors, with the presence of a U.S. diplomat expressly appreciated. End comment.

¶10. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
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